



Substitute Senate Bill No. 427

Public Act No. 10-109

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF HAND-HELD MOBILE
TELEPHONES AND MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES BY MOTOR
VEHICLE OPERATORS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 14-296aa of the 2010 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2010*):

(a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) "Mobile telephone" means a cellular, analog, wireless or digital telephone capable of sending or receiving telephone communications without an access line for service.

(2) "Using" or "use" means holding a hand-held mobile telephone to, or in the immediate proximity of, the user's ear.

(3) "Hand-held mobile telephone" means a mobile telephone with which a user engages in a call using at least one hand.

(4) "Hands-free accessory" means an attachment, add-on, built-in feature, or addition to a mobile telephone, whether or not permanently

Substitute Senate Bill No. 427

installed in a motor vehicle, that, when used, allows the vehicle operator to maintain both hands on the steering wheel.

(5) "Hands-free mobile telephone" means a hand-held mobile telephone that has an internal feature or function, or that is equipped with an attachment or addition, whether or not permanently part of such hand-held mobile telephone, by which a user engages in a call without the use of either hand, whether or not the use of either hand is necessary to activate, deactivate or initiate a function of such telephone.

(6) "Engage in a call" means talking into or listening on a hand-held mobile telephone, but does not include holding a hand-held mobile telephone to activate, deactivate or initiate a function of such telephone.

(7) "Immediate proximity" means the distance that permits the operator of a hand-held mobile telephone to hear telecommunications transmitted over such hand-held mobile telephone, but does not require physical contact with such operator's ear.

(8) "Mobile electronic device" means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more persons, including a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital photographs are taken or transmitted, or any combination thereof, but does not include any audio equipment or any equipment installed in a motor vehicle for the purpose of providing navigation, emergency assistance to the operator of such motor vehicle or video entertainment to the passengers in the rear seats of such motor vehicle.

(b) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection and

Substitute Senate Bill No. 427

subsections (c) and (d) of this section, no person shall operate a motor vehicle upon a highway, as defined in [subsection (a) of] section 14-1, while using a hand-held mobile telephone to engage in a call or while using a mobile electronic device while such vehicle is in motion. An operator of a motor vehicle who types, sends or reads a text message with a hand-held mobile telephone or mobile electronic device while such vehicle is in motion shall be in violation of this section. (2) An operator of a motor vehicle who holds a hand-held mobile telephone to, or in the immediate proximity of, his or her ear while such vehicle is in motion is presumed to be engaging in a call within the meaning of this section. The presumption established by this subdivision is rebuttable by evidence tending to show that the operator was not engaged in a call. (3) The provisions of this subsection shall not be construed as authorizing the seizure or forfeiture of a hand-held mobile telephone or a mobile electronic device, unless otherwise provided by law. (4) Subdivision (1) of this subsection does not apply to: (A) The use of a hand-held mobile telephone for the sole purpose of communicating with any of the following regarding an emergency situation: An emergency response operator; a hospital, physician's office or health clinic; an ambulance company; a fire department; or a police department, or (B) any of the following persons while in the performance of their official duties and within the scope of their employment: A peace officer, as defined in subdivision (9) of section 53a-3, a firefighter or an operator of an ambulance or authorized emergency vehicle, as defined in [subsection (a) of] section 14-1, or a member of the armed forces of the United States, as defined in section 27-103, while operating a military vehicle, or (C) the use of a hands-free mobile telephone.

(c) No person shall use a hand-held mobile telephone or other electronic device, including those with hands-free accessories, or a mobile electronic device while operating a moving school bus that is carrying passengers, except that this subsection does not apply to (1) a

Substitute Senate Bill No. 427

school bus driver who places an emergency call to school officials, or
(2) the use of a hand-held mobile telephone as provided in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (4) of subsection (b) of this section.

(d) No person under eighteen years of age shall use any hand-held mobile telephone, including one with a hands-free accessory, or a mobile electronic device while operating a moving motor vehicle on a public highway, except as provided in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (4) of subsection (b) of this section.

(e) Except as provided in subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, of this section, no person shall engage in any activity not related to the actual operation of a motor vehicle in a manner that interferes with the safe operation of such vehicle on any highway, as defined in [subsection (a) of] section 14-1.

(f) Any law enforcement officer who issues a summons for a violation of subsection (b), (c), (d) or (i) of this section shall record, on any summons form issued in connection with the matter, the specific nature of any distracted driving behavior observed by such officer that contributed to the issuance of such summons.

(g) Any person who violates subsection (b) of this section shall be fined [not more than] one hundred dollars [, except that the fine shall be suspended for a first time violator who provides proof of acquisition of a hands-free accessory subsequent to the violation but prior to the imposition of a fine] for a first violation, one hundred fifty dollars for a second violation and two hundred dollars for a third or subsequent violation.

(h) Any person who violates subsection (c) or (d) of this section shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars.

(i) An operator of a motor vehicle who commits a moving violation, as defined in subsection (a) of section 14-111g, while engaged in any

Substitute Senate Bill No. 427

activity prohibited under subsection (e) of this section shall be fined one hundred dollars in addition to any penalty or fine imposed for the moving violation.

(j) The state shall remit to a municipality twenty-five per cent of the amount received with respect to each summons issued by such municipality for a violation of this section. Each clerk of the Superior Court or the Chief Court Administrator, or any other official of the Superior Court designated by the Chief Court Administrator, shall, on or before the thirtieth day of January, April, July and October in each year, certify to the Comptroller the amount due for the previous quarter under this subsection to each municipality served by the office of the clerk or official.